

# Substance Abuse Prevention

## Environmental Prevention Needs Assessment Workbook SFY2014



## Part 3 Analysis & Recommendations

SANDERS COUNTY

Version 1  
August 2013

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## INTRODUCTION

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Montana's overarching substance abuse prevention strategy is based on the public health approach to reducing substance use by focusing on preventing health problems and promoting healthy living for whole populations.

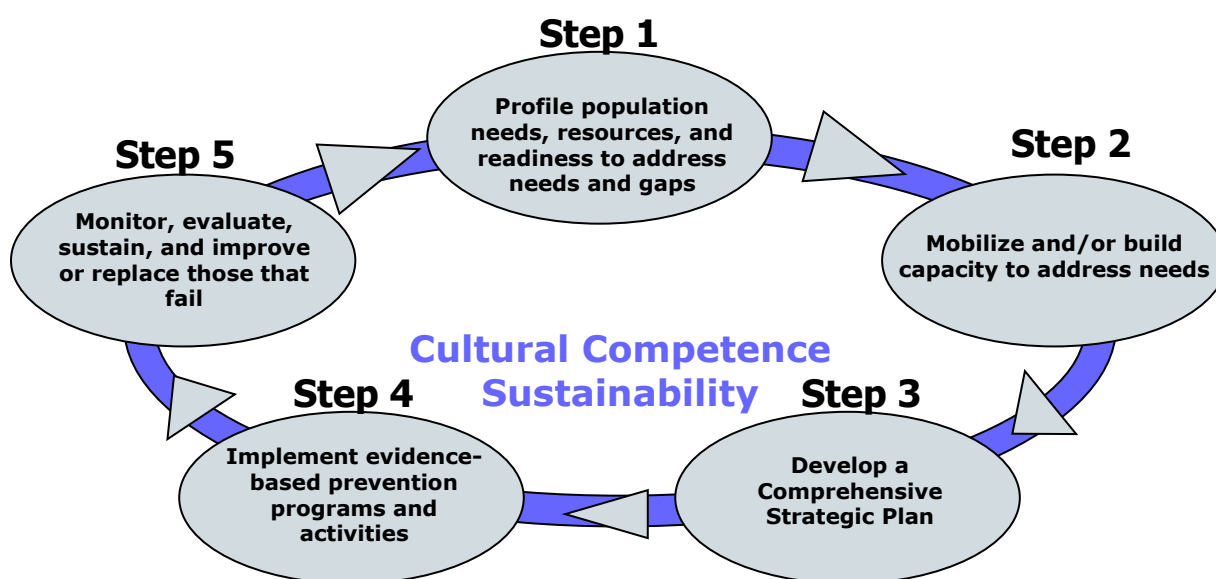
Montana utilizes a State Epidemiological Workgroup (SEW) to collect and review state-wide data and prioritize areas most in need for prevention efforts. Based on this data, specific recommendations have been made to support the importance of planning to ensure substance abuse and targeted mental and behavioral health prevention goals are met. Based on the comprehensive data collected by the SEW, the identified substance abuse prevention priorities are:

1. Underage Drinking
2. Binge Drinking
3. Drinking and Driving
4. Riding with a Driver who is Drinking
5. Prescription Drug Misuse and Abuse

The public health approach identifies trends in a population as they relate to substance use and abuse thereby targeting prevention activities at an environmental level verses an individual or person-centered level. Therefore, a key element in this process is the use of epidemiological data to describe the extent and consequences of substance use within and across populations.

Montana uses the Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) process (Figure 1) in order to **answer the public health questions** and **determine what environmental interventions will be most effective** for addressing the specific problems in a community.

Figure 1: Five Steps of the Strategic Prevention Framework Process



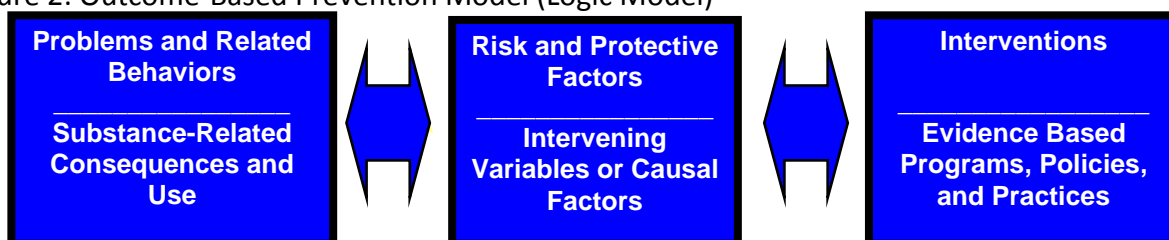
To complete the SPF step one, **Assessment**, a local needs assessment will need to be completed at the county level. This will involve gathering data to illuminate the problem(s) and the causal area(s) that contribute to the problems. This is achieved by answering a series of questions. Most of the data you gather will exist in various data sources, but you will also have to do some original research. Data gathering activities will include:

- Compiling existing survey results
- Original data collection
- Interviews with key partners and stakeholders

## Outcome-Based Prevention (Logic Model)

The foundation of the Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) process is illustrated by the outcome-based prevention model, seen in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Outcome-Based Prevention Model (Logic Model)



In this model, a community details its substance-related consumption and consequence data, researches the causal areas that may impact these problems and chooses evidence-based policies, practices and programs to address the identified causal areas.

## Purpose

The purpose of this workbook is to help Montana communities go through the outcome-based prevention model. The first step is to complete a comprehensive local needs assessment in each county or reservation. This will help communities accurately assess local alcohol-related and prescription drug-related problems using epidemiological and other relevant data and understand the environmental factors that influence these problems. To be effective, one person in a community should not complete this workbook. Instead, community partners should work together to complete the workbook. The data collect will address the following problems;

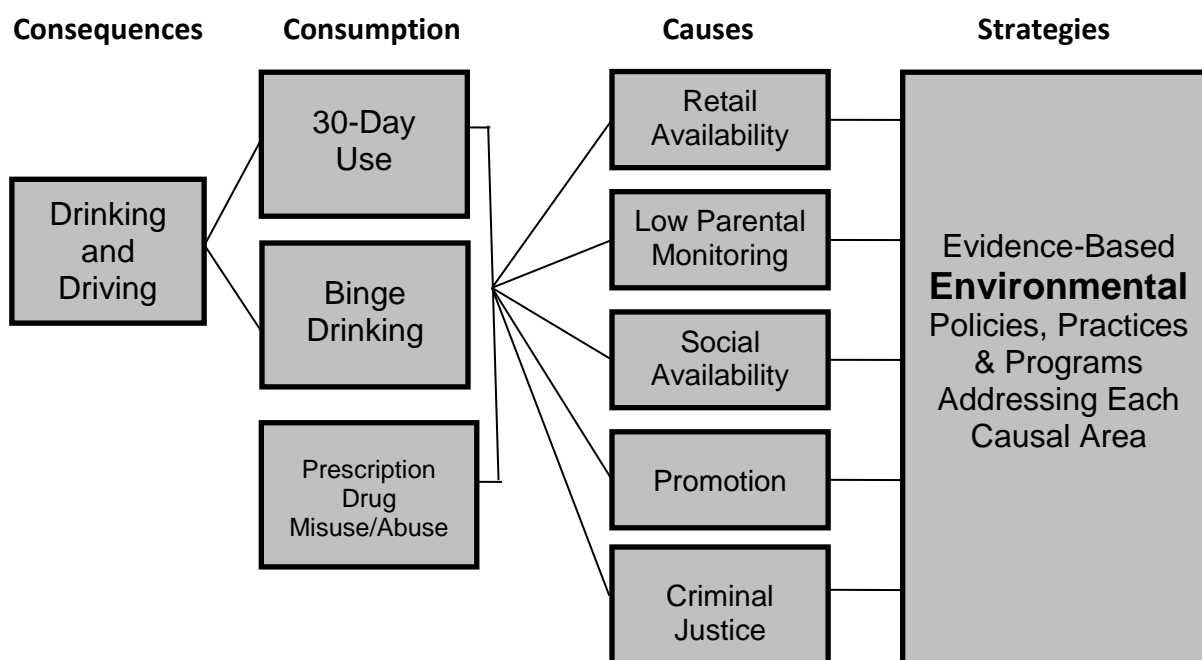
### **Problems to be addressed**

1. *Underage drinking ages 12- 21.*
2. *Binge drinking with an emphasis on youth under age 21.*
3. *Drinking and driving with an emphasis on youth under age 21.*
4. *Riding with a driver who is drinking with an emphasis on youth under age 21.*
5. *Misuse and Abuse of Prescription Drugs with an emphasis on ages 12-25.*

The environmental factors contributing to the problems may vary from community to community and, therefore, require differing responses (environmental solutions). Part 3 of this workbook (Analysis and Recommendations) will provide a foundation for determining which environmental solutions are best suited to meet the unique needs of your community.

Tasks that follow reflect the outcome-based prevention model and recent research detailing the causal areas of substance abuse problems. There are four major sections (problems, causes, prioritization and resource assessment). Within each there are data to collect and questions to answer. The following model has been expanded to reflect solutions that are evidence-based and environmental, as illustrated in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Outcome-Based Prevention Model



Each county or reservation should complete the following tasks in order to better understand the problems and influences surrounding prescription drug use, drinking, and drinking and driving in their community. This will lead to focused mobilization and capacity building, as well as aid in the prioritization of evidence-based **environmental** strategies within the community's strategic plan.

\*Binge drinking refers to having five or more drinks within approximately two hours for men and four or more drinks within approximately two hours for women (NIAAA).

## **Collection of Existing Survey Results**

Upon completion of gathering the local data (Part 2-Local Data), each county will receive census data, recently published survey data, and archival data for their individual county (Part 1 – National, State, County Data). Using Part 1 and Part 2 of the Data Workbook, communities will complete Part 3 (Analysis and Recommendations) to develop work plans for multiple funding sources. The data workbook will be updated in the spring of each year.

In addition to the existing data sources that are specifically outlined in Part 1 of the Data Workbook, local data (Part 2) unique to your community can be used enhance your community's understanding of the problems and aid in identifying environmental strategies. For instance, many community colleges may have results from the National College Health Assessment (NCHA). In addition, your community may have already gathered survey results from businesses, local law enforcement or youth that may help in the needs assessment.

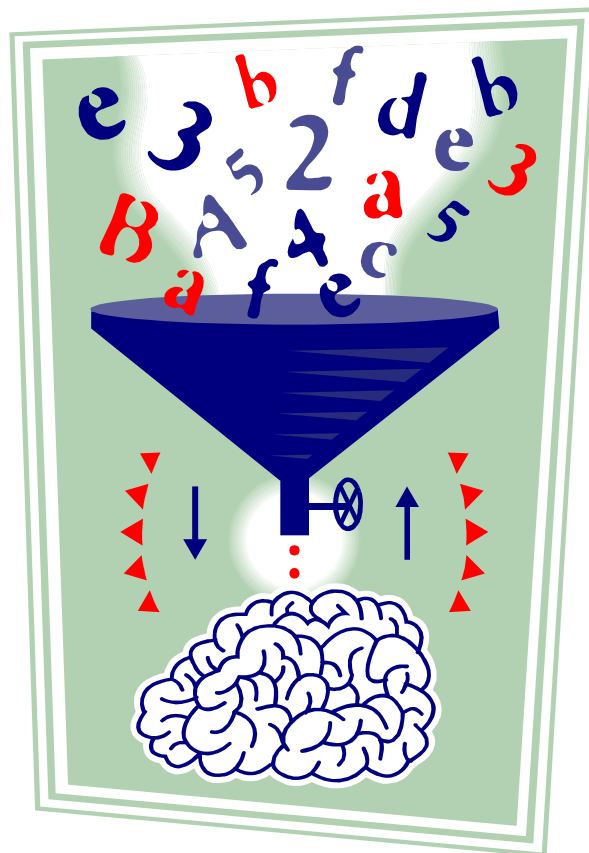
## **Interviews with Law Enforcement Officials and Medical Personnel**

You will need to interview key officials from law enforcement and the medical field that serves your community to get a better picture of the problems associated with prescription drug use, drinking, and drinking and driving in your community. Information and tools for conducting these interviews is provided in the Appendices.

## **Collection of Original Data**

In several areas of this workbook you will be asked to compile very specific information. This data collection will include such things as counting the number of buildings which advertise alcohol, or counting the number of events where alcohol companies or distributors are sponsors. The point of this data collection is to gather information directly from your community by observation or library research. In all cases, the original data collection process is explained in detail. You will also need to collect data from local hospital, pharmacies and medical prescribers along with school officials. A list of the requested data needed is provided in the appropriate sections.

# Problems



**Task One:**  
**Explore Consequence and Consumption Data in Your Community**  
**in Order to Identify What Problems are of Greatest Concern**

## CONSEQUENCES – PART 3

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Alcohol-related consequences are defined as the social, economic and health problems associated with binge drinking. This first section looks at the alcohol-related motor vehicle crash data and will help you understand the impact or consequence this has on your community. While it is recognized that not all communities will experience exactly the same impact, the consequence this project is focused on reducing is motor vehicle crashes.

### **Motor Vehicle Crashes**

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One of the major consequences of drinking alcohol is motor vehicle crashes resulting in injury and death. Drinking and driving have significant negative consequences for Montana's population. Your task will be to use the motor vehicle crash information for your community, rate the data and compare it with the state data using Workbook Part 1 - Tables 2 through 4.

#### **QUESTION 1 Motor Vehicle Crashes**

Based on Tables 2 through 4 and any other local data, how do alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes in your community compare to alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes across the state? Is your problem bigger, smaller or about the same? Discuss the differences.

Sanders County has experienced a significant decrease in alcohol-related crashes since 2008 when on average an alcohol-related crash occurred every 13 days. Consistent with the statewide downward trend, Sanders County's overall crash rate decreased by 25 percent from 2008 to 2012, but remains above the State average for all years collectively.

The overall change for the this time period may speak to the collaboration of enforcement agencies and community groups such as the Sanders County DUI Task Force and Elevate Youth Coalition (a DFC grant recipient), to raise awareness through increased enforcement operations, media attention, educational opportunities and community-wide collaboration efforts. Although a 25 percent decrease is encouraging, focused attention remains a priority in Sanders County.



## **Underage Drinking and Driving**

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### **QUESTION 2 Underage Drinking and Driving**

Based on Tables 5 through 7 and your community's own local data, how does underage drinking in your community compare to adult binge drinking across the state? Is your problem bigger, smaller or about the same? Discuss the differences.

As shown in Table 5, PNA data indicates the average rate of drinking and driving among Sanders county Youth in grades 8-12 has decreased by more than 80 percent. When compared to State and National levels, Sanders County youth appear to be engaging in this risky behavior at a lower level than their peers. However, Sanders County youth grades 8 & 10 did not participate in the MPNA Survey in 2010 & grades 10 & 12 did not participate in 2012 and as a result this rate decrease does not accurately reflect behavioral changes for this risk factor.

## **High School Students Riding in Car Driving by Someone Who Has Been Drinking**

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### **QUESTION 3 High School Students riding in a Car Driven by Someone Who Has Been Drinking**

Based on Tables 8 through 10 and your community's own local data, how does underage drinking in your community compare to adult binge drinking across the state? Is your problem bigger, smaller or about the same? Discuss the differences.

In 2012, 24.7 percent fewer Sanders County youth (grades 8-12) reported riding in a car driven by someone who has been drinking than did in 2008. However, this number does not accurately reflect trends for 2008-2012 timeframe, as not all Sanders County students grades 10 & 12 participated in MPNA Survey in 2012.

The decline in the percentage of students riding in a car driven by someone who has been drinking may also be attributed to increased community awareness around the consequences of drinking and driving, changes in community/societal norms and/or in the perception among young people that riding with someone who has been drinking alcohol is dangerous.

*\*Sanders County rates for this risk factor 2008-2012 = 20.73% as compared to 28.9% MT Data*

## **Final Consequence Question**

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### **QUESTION 4**

Based on all of the consequence data analyzed here and your answers to Questions 1 through 3, how is motor vehicle crashes, underage drinking and driving, and high school students riding in vehicles driven by driver who had been drinking impacting your community? Explain the rationale for your response.

Sanders County has experienced a significant decrease in alcohol-related crashes since 2008 when an average of one alcohol-related crash occurred every thirteen days. Consistent with the statewide downward trend, Sanders county's overall crash rate has decreased 2008-2012. There appears to be a slight downward trend in community with youth riding in a car with someone who has been drinking. This is encouraging news and speaks to the collaboration of multiple enforcement agencies and community groups to raise awareness through increased enforcement operations, media attention and educational opportunities.

## **CONSUMPTION – PART 3**

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This section looks at consumption data and will help you identify which alcohol-related consumption problems are greatest in your community. Consumption data includes binge drinking, underage drinking and driving, and high school students riding in cars driven by someone drinking. While it is recognized that not all communities will experience exactly the same problems the specific focus for the SPF SIG will be binge drinking.

## **Underage Binge Drinking**

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### **QUESTION 5 Underage Binge Drinking**

Based on Tables 11 through 14 and your community's own local data, how does underage binge drinking in your community compare to underage binge drinking across the state? Is your problem bigger, smaller or about the same? Discuss the differences.

When looking at youth binge drinking rates in Sanders County 2008-2012, Sanders County youth are binge drinking at slightly below the state rate. Binge drinking in a two-week period dropped from 23.8 percent in 2008(27.7 for American Indians) to 2.0 & 3.3 in 2012. However, this number does not accurately reflect trends for 2008-2012 timeframe, as not all Sanders County students grades 10 & 12 participated in MPNA Survey in 2012.

## **Adult Binge Drinking**

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**QUESTION 6 Adult Binge Drinking**

Based on Tables 15 and 16 and your community's own local data, how does adult binge drinking in your community compare to adult binge drinking across the state? Is your problem bigger, smaller or about the same? Discuss the differences.

Currently Montana only collects information through the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BFRSS). This data is released at the state level and the five health planning region levels. It has been shown that the differences in the data between the health planning regions are not statistically significant. Sanders County is in the Northwest Region, which also includes Sanders, Flathead, Lake, Mineral and Ravalli counties (*source – Missoula Co. 2014 Data Workbook*).

\*Local law enforcement and members of the SC DUI Task Force speak to over-service, visible intoxication and binge drinking by adults as a big problem across the county. Enforcement is actively enforcing DUI and over service issues when possible.

**Underage Drinking (30 Day Use for Alcohol)**

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**QUESTION 7 Underage Drinking** Based on Tables 17 through 19 and your community's own local data, how does underage drinking in your community compare to underage drinking across the state? Is your problem bigger, smaller or about the same? Discuss the differences.

Since 2008, state rates of underage drinking have dropped 3-4 percentage points in grades 8, 10 and 12 for an overall decrease of 8.6 percent for all grades. In Sanders County, prevention efforts/messages primarily are focused on the adults of the community. Enforcement agencies, prevention specialists, educators and community groups have been purposeful in engaging in collaborative, community-wide strategies to build awareness around the risks associated with underage drinking, increase the perception of risk for adults to provide alcohol to youth through social and retail sources, increase youth perception of risk for getting caught by law enforcement if they are drinking alcohol, increase focus on drinking and driving prevention through community education and consistent citation and adjudication for those who choose to break the law in these areas. Positive changes in alcohol-related crash rates, implementation of compliance checks, decrease in youth perception that alcohol is easy or very easy to get point to successful implementation of those adult-focused environmental strategies. Higher numbers of adults statewide report binge drinking in a two week period, and as shown in the Causal Factor data sets, youth report that parents are not talking with their kids about the risks involved in using alcohol and/or drugs, the perception by youth that they will be caught by parents if they drink alcohol is decreasing and there is an overall perception that peers do not disapprove of regular alcohol use. Decreased perception of risk and harm and little communication with the adults young people say matter the most in their decisions regarding substance use are contributing to a marked increase in 30 day use by 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students. Maintaining current prevention efforts is important as is broadening the scope to the larger community with a focus on the youth/parent connection.

## **Prescription Drug Abuse by Youth (30 Day Use)**

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### **QUESTION 8 Prescription Drug Abuse**

Based on Tables 20 and 22 and your community's own local data, how does the data about prescription drug abuse by youth in your community compare to the same data across the state? Is your problem bigger, smaller or about the same? Discuss the differences.

PNA and county-level YRBS data indicate that prescription drug use rose among Sanders County youth grades 8-12, from 9.1 percent in 2008 to 12 percent in 2010. YRBS data reflects an increased trend across the state for Past 30 Day Use – 16.2% (2011 YRBS) to 18.4% percent in 2013 (YRBS).

Understanding the progressive nature of addiction and it's connection to community level problems, law enforcement officials report Rx drug abuse as one of their top concerns for Sanders county youth and are collaborating with prevention specialists and health care professionals to grow awareness of communication strategies, identify drug-seeking behavior in the adult community and implement safe prescribing practices in effort to keep community supply levels down and reduce the risk of youth access.

In addition to enforcement efforts, Sanders County Sheriff's Office, Sanders County DUI Task Force and Elevate Youth Coalition will implement environmental prevention strategies in an attempt to reduce youth access. These efforts, aimed primarily at adults, focus on reducing access across the lifespan while raising awareness around the risks and liabilities of Rx drug abuse and misuse.

Prevention specialists have worked to build awareness and encourage safe and healthy choices around both OTC and Rx medicines. Elevate Coalition is including youth in a county-wide media campaign around these issues.

## **Final Consumption Question**

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### **QUESTION 9**

Based on all of the consumption data analyzed here and your answers to Questions 5 through 8, how are underage drinking, binge drinking, and prescription drug abuse impacting your community? Explain the rationale for your response.

Underage drinking is on the rise in Sanders County. Nearly 18 percent of 8<sup>th</sup> graders report having used alcohol in the 30 days prior to participating in the 2012 PNA – nearly a 10 percent increase since 2008.

In Sanders County, prevention efforts/messages have been focused primarily at the adults of the community. Enforcement agencies, prevention specialists, educators and community groups have been purposeful in engaging in collaborative, community-wide strategies shown to build awareness around the risks associated with underage drinking, increase the perception of risk for

adults to provide alcohol to youth through social and retail sources, increase youth perception of risk for getting caught by law enforcement if they are drinking alcohol, increase focus on drinking and driving prevention through community education and consistent citation and adjudication for those who choose to break the law in these areas. Positive changes in alcohol-related crash rates, increased compliance check pass rates, decrease in youth perception that alcohol is easy or very easy to get point to successful implementation of those adult-focused environmental strategies.

A larger community-wide conversation needs to happen to ensure that our young people in grades 8-12 getting the message. Higher numbers of adults statewide report binge drinking in a two week period, and as shown in the Causal Factor data sets, youth report that parents are not talking with their kids about the risks involved in using alcohol and/or drugs, the perception by youth that they will be caught by parents if they drink alcohol is decreasing and there is an overall perception that peers do not disapprove of regular alcohol use.

Decreased perception of risk and harm and little communication with the adults young people say matter the most in their decisions regarding substance use are contributing to a marked increase in 30 day use by 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students. When we talk about our hopes for our community and for our youth, we do not mention risky sex, unplanned pregnancy, accidental drowning, crashes or death. Topics such as depression, decreased athletic and academic performance never enter the conversation. But as long as our young people choose to drink early, often and in high quantities - they will continue to suffer the consequences of risky behaviors associated with underage drinking, and until our community is willing to engage the difficult questions around cultural norms and the root causes of the problems we face – we will continue to clean up the physical and emotional mess left behind as a result. Maintaining current prevention efforts is important as is broadening the scope to the larger community with a focus on the youth/parent connection. Each sector of the community (educators, youth serving organizations, volunteer groups, prevention specialists, enforcement agencies, the faith community...) can all come alongside youth and families and offer prevention efforts from their own perspectives.

PNA and county-level YRBS data indicates that prescription drug use by youth following national and state trends. Interviews with law enforcement and treatment professionals reveal high levels of use in the adult community and the natural link between Rx drug abuse, increased crime rates and the introduction of heroin use to the community. Medical professionals are dealing with Rx drug related emergency room visits and drug seeking behavior. Community health has dealt with Hepatitis C and STD outbreaks linked directly to Rx drug and heroin use and multiple deaths have resulted from overdose.

Law enforcement officials, educators, prevention, treatment and healthcare professionals are beginning to work together as part of the Elevate Youth Coalition to build awareness of the scope and magnitude of the risks associated with Rx abuse and misuse. Reversing this trend in crucial to community health in Sanders County.

## **RISK FACTORS - PART 3**

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## **Perception of Parental Disapproval/Attitude**

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### **QUESTION 10 Parental Attitudes and Disapproval**

Based on Table 23 and your community's own local data, how does the data about parental attitudes and disapproval towards alcohol/drug use in your community compare to the same data across the state? Is your problem bigger, smaller or about the same? Discuss the differences.

According to MPNA data – Overall, when compared to their peers across the state, the percentage of Sanders county students perceiving parental disapproval of alcohol/drug use ranks lower for years 2008-2012, indicating a bigger problem among Sanders county youth than across the state. Nationally, 86 percent of youth report their parent/guardian is the number one influence in their life regarding their decision to use/refuse alcohol and other drugs. Local data indicates only 30 percent of youth in Sanders County report having had a conversation with their parent or another significant adult in their lives about the use of alcohol, tobacco or other drugs. Additionally, 21% of Sanders county youth (2008-2012) report riding in a vehicle with someone who has been drinking. Decreased perception of risk and harm and little communication with the adults young people say matter the most in their decisions regarding substance use are contributing to a marked increase in 30 day use by 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students. When we talk about our hopes for our community and for our youth, we do not mention risky sex, unplanned pregnancy, accidental drowning, crashes or death. Topics such as depression, decreased athletic and academic performance never enter the conversation. But as long as our young people choose to drink early, often and in high quantities - they will continue to suffer the consequences of risky behaviors associated with underage drinking, and until our community is willing to engage the difficult questions around cultural norms and the root causes of the problems we face – we will continue to clean up the physical and emotional mess left behind as a result. Maintaining current prevention efforts is important as is broadening the scope to the larger community with a focus on the youth/parent connection. Each sector of the community (educators, youth serving organizations, volunteer groups, prevention specialists, enforcement agencies, the faith community...) can all come alongside youth and families and offer prevention efforts from their own perspectives.

### **QUESTION 11 Peer Attitudes and Disapproval**

Based on Table 24 and your community's own local data, how does the data about peer attitudes and disapproval towards alcohol/drug use in your community compare to the same data across the state? Is your problem bigger, smaller or about the same? Discuss the differences.

According to MPNA data, when compared to their peers across the state for all years, the percentage of Sanders county students disapproving of their peers alcohol/drug use is about the same 2008 and years 2009-2012 indicates Sanders County youth have a lower rate of disapproval (64%), than their peers across the state (82%).

Based on information collected through Youth Perception Surveys, MIP Class information and Environmental Scans, Sanders County Youth engaging in the risky behaviors of drug and alcohol use support one another in their own use. However, there is also a very clear message of disappointment sent from peers when a teammate is removed from a sport because of a drug/alcohol-related offense.

## Perceived Risk/Harm of Use

### QUESTION 12 Perceived Risk/Harm of Use

Based on Tables 26 through 30 and your community's own local data, how does the data about perceived risk/harm of use in your community compare to the same data across the state? Is your problem bigger, smaller or about the same? Discuss the differences.

***Table 27: 2008-2012 Percentage of Students Who Believe it is Cool to Drink Alcohol Regularly for All Races***

<b><u>2008</u></b>	<b><u>2010</u></b>	<b><u>2012</u></b>
County: 25.7	County: 20.5	County: 1.5 (10/12 not surveyed)
State: 27.9	State: 25.4	State: 23.5

When compared to their peers across the state for all years (2008-2012) in Sanders County, less youth (15.9) in grades 8-12 believe it is cool to drink alcohol regularly. *\*Numbers are not reflective of total student population for 2012 – grades 10 & 12 not surveyed in 2012.*

Sanders county Perception Surveys, MIP Class/Focus Groups and Environmental Scans indicate youth that are seen as leaders by students, coaches, administrators and teachers, are often the ones seen in MIP classes. Although they are leaders, all are not willing to speak around issues relating to underage drinking, and since they are seen as leaders, other students are reluctant to join in the conversation.

*\*Add additional information from Part 1 Data Tables*

## Family Communication around Alcohol/Drug Use

### QUESTION 13 Family Communications around Alcohol/Drug Use

Based on Table 25 and your community's own local data, how does the data about family communication around alcohol/drug use in your community compare to the same data across the state? Is your problem bigger, smaller or about the same? Discuss the differences.

According to Table 25, years 2008-2012 indicate Sanders County students having a discussion with their parents about alcohol and drug use at less half the rate of their peers across the state.

Parents are named in public opinion surveys as allowing or providing alcohol to youth and PNA data confirms public opinion. Only 40 percent of youth grades 8-12(2008-2012) believe they will be caught by a parent if drinking alcohol without permission. Studies consistently show the number one influence in a child's life is their parents and the number one deterrent for youth to begin using alcohol, tobacco and other drugs is parent disapproval and yet only 31 percent of Sanders county youth grades 8-12 report having a conversation with their parents about drugs or alcohol in the past 12 months. Elevate Coalition in collaboration with the SC DUI Task Force, has begun to implement a media campaign that will be seen by the youth, but targeted at adults in the community to begin the community conversation. Research shows media has the power to change attitudes. Elevate Coalition will use a variety of media outlets including newspaper, radio and signage to create a steady stream of proactive messages aimed at creating community level changes in awareness, attitudes and behaviors. Continue collaboration efforts with DUI TF, Elevate Youth Coalition, schools and youth to offer support of media creation - radio and theatre PSA's, counter-advertising, billboard concepts and other signage.

Decreased perception of risk and harm and little communication with the adults young people say matter the most in their decisions regarding substance use are contributing to a marked increase in 30 day use by 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students. When we talk about our hopes for our community and for our youth, we do not mention risky sex, unplanned pregnancy, accidental drowning, crashes or death. Topics such as depression, decreased athletic and academic performance never enter the conversation. But as long as our young people choose to drink early, often and in high quantities - they will continue to suffer the consequences of risky behaviors associated with underage drinking, and until our community is willing to engage the difficult questions around cultural norms and the root causes of the problems we face – we will continue to clean up the physical and emotional mess left behind as a result. Maintaining current prevention efforts is important as is broadening the scope to the larger community with a focus on the youth/parent connection. Each sector of the community (educators, youth serving organizations, volunteer groups, prevention specialists, enforcement agencies, the faith community...) can all come alongside youth and families and offer prevention efforts from their own perspectives.

#### **Youth/Parent Education:**

Local prevention workers continue to work with the SCSO, DUI TF, Elevate Youth, school and youth to advocate for sound policy implementation with area schools by helping with presentation of information around underage drinking and drinking and driving at mandatory parent/athlete meetings and by creating a presentation to be delivered during scheduled Driver's Education Programs.



## **Alcohol Use is Causing Problems in Areas of Financial, Legal, Emotional, etc.**

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### **QUESTION 14 Alcohol is Causing Problems in Areas related to Financial, Legal, Emotional, etc.**

Based on Table 31 and your community's own local data, how does the data about problems related to financial, legal, emotional, etc., around alcohol/drug use in your community compare to the same data across the state? Is your problem bigger, smaller or about the same? Discuss the differences

According to Table 31, Students in Sanders County and across the State of Montana do not believe they are negatively affected by alcohol. Increased youth, parent and community education in this area is imperative.

Comparison for all years – 2008-2012:

County: only 4.6%

State: only 9.23%

The above percentages indicate the crucial need for continued education in this area. Local prevention officers, Elevate Youth, DUI Task Force and schools will continue to integrate prevention programs and educate parents, youth and community of the effects of alcohol on the developing brain and athletic and academic performance based on the American Athletic Institute's Life of an Athlete program.

## **Final Risk Factors Question**

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### **QUESTION 15**

Based on the risk data collected in questions 10 through 14, how is your community affected by the risk factors outlined above? Explain the rationale for your response.

Underage drinking is on the rise in Sanders County. Nearly 20 percent of 8<sup>th</sup> graders report having used alcohol in the 30 days prior to participating in the 2012 PNA – nearly double the amount reported in 2010.

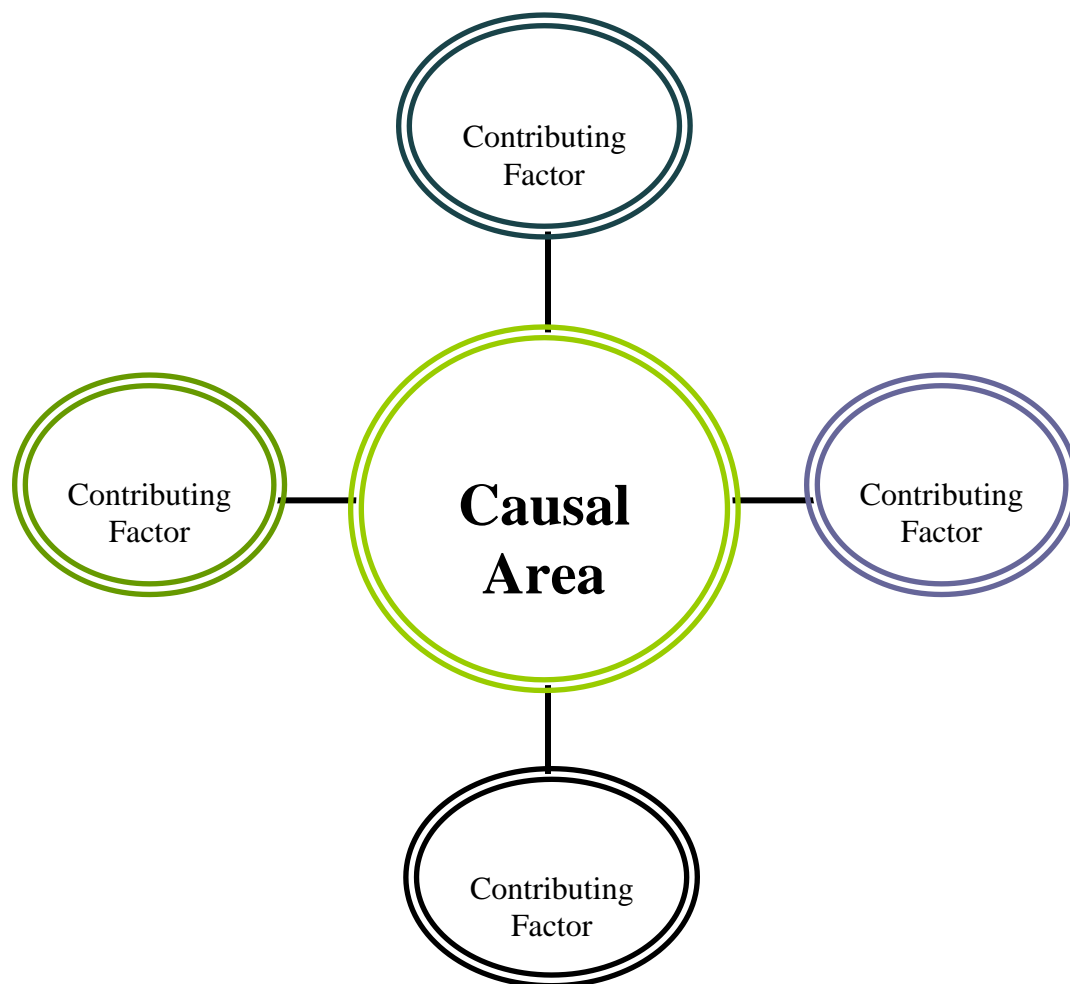
In Sanders County, prevention efforts/messages are focused on the adults in the community. Enforcement agencies, prevention specialists, educators and community groups have been purposeful in engaging in collaborative, community-wide strategies show to build awareness around the risks associated with underage drinking, increase the perception of risk for adults to provide alcohol to youth through social and retail sources, increase youth perception of risk for getting caught by law enforcement if they are drinking alcohol, increase focus on drinking and driving prevention through community education and consistent citation and adjudication for those who choose to break the law in these areas. Positive changes in alcohol-related crash rates, increased compliance check pass rates, decrease in youth perception that alcohol is easy or very easy to get point to successful implementation of those adult-focused environmental strategies.

2012 PNA data warns that the larger community-wide conversation is not happening and that our young people in grades 8-12 are not getting the message. Higher numbers of adults statewide report binge drinking in a two week period, and as shown in the Causal Factor data sets, youth report that parents are not talking with their kids about the risks involved in using alcohol and/or drugs, the perception by youth that they will be caught by parents if they drink alcohol is decreasing and there is an overall perception that peers do not disapprove of regular alcohol use. Decreased perception of risk and harm and little communication with the adults young people say matter the most in their decisions regarding substance use are contributing to a marked increase in 30 day use by 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students. When we talk about our hopes for our community and for our youth, we do not mention risky sex, unplanned pregnancy, accidental drowning, crashes or death. Topics such as depression, decreased athletic and academic performance never enter the conversation. But as long as our young people choose to drink early, often and in high quantities - they will continue to suffer the consequences of risky behaviors associated with underage drinking, and until our community is willing to engage the difficult questions around cultural norms and the root causes of the problems we face – we will continue to clean up the physical and emotional mess left behind as a result. Maintaining current prevention efforts is important as is broadening the scope to the larger community with a focus on the youth/parent connection. Each sector of the community (educators, youth serving organizations, volunteer groups, prevention specialists, enforcement agencies, the faith community...) can all come alongside youth and families and offer prevention efforts from their own perspectives.

PNA and county-level YRBS data indicates that prescription drug use continues to be on the rise. Law enforcement interviews reveal high levels of use in the adult community and the natural link between Rx drug abuse, increased crime rates and the introduction of heroin use to the community. Medical professionals are dealing with Rx drug related emergency room visits and drug seeking behavior.

Law enforcement officials, educators, prevention, treatment and healthcare professionals are working together as part of the Sanders County Elevate Youth Coalition and DUI Task Force to build awareness of the scope and magnitude of the risks associated with Rx abuse and misuse. Reversing this trend is crucial to community health in Sanders County.

# Causal Areas



**Task Two:**  
**Gather Data on Four Causal Areas**

## **Environmental Causal Area**

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In this section you will conduct an environmental assessment of your community by collecting data related to environmental factors known to impact underage drinking, binge drinking, drinking and driving within communities and prescription drug misuse/abuse. It will be necessary to collect data from several sources, including a review of your local media over a defined period and through face-to-face interviews with your local law enforcement agencies. It will be necessary to collect data related to four casual areas:

- Retail Availability and Accessibility of Alcohol
- Criminal Justice System, including Law Enforcement
- Social Availability of Alcohol
- Promotion of Alcohol

In addition to collecting the defined information, communities may also identify other relevant data unique to their community for inclusion in this process. Because some of the data collection in this section is based on personal perception, it is very important that multiple individuals contribute to the data collection process to ensure the results are reasonably representative of the community.

When you have completed this section you will have a thorough understanding of the environmental factors influencing binge drinking, underage drinking, drinking/driving and riding with a driver who is drinking and prescription drug misuse/abuse by youth within your community. The information collected in this section will have two purposes:

1. Support selection of evidence-based environmental prevention strategies that will produce the greatest impact on binge drinking, underage drinking, drinking and driving/riding with a driver who is drinking and prescription drug misuse/abuse by youth in your community.
2. Provide necessary input to the environmental prevention implementation plan for your community.

## **RETAIL AVAILABILITY – PART 3**

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### **Compliance Checks**

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The selling of alcohol to minors or to individuals who are intoxicated can contribute to the misuse of alcohol in your community. One measure of this is the failure of compliance checks by retail outlets. Collect the following data for your community. If compliance checks are conducted by more than one agency, it will be necessary to collect data from multiple law agencies in your community (Sheriff, Deputy, City Police, Tribal Law Enforcement, and Highway Patrol). In some counties, the DUI Task Force may have compliance check data available.

#### **QUESTION 16 Compliance Checks**

Based on Table 2-3 does the failure percent seem to be rising or staying the same. Discuss the impact this may be having on your community.

Based on information gathered from Youth Perception Surveys, Focus Groups and law enforcement data, the implementation of consistent compliance checks in Sanders County have had an increased impact of the perception of risk of getting caught for MIP/DUI.

Consistent Compliance Checks have not been conducted in Sanders County since 2010. At that time, the failure rate was 35%. Sanders County law enforcement is actively conducting saturation patrols during high-risk timeframes – holidays and special events. Recent DOT funding will support law enforcement in the implementation of quarterly compliance checks. These strategies will send the message that law enforcement is consistently enforcing DUI, Over Service, Underage Sales and MIP laws. Increased enforcement of MIP/DUI and implementation of the 24/7 program, a community wide media campaign and increased parent, youth and community education is beginning to create a shift in what the community views as acceptable behaviors around these issues.

#### **QUESTION 17 Compliance Checks**

If your community does not do compliance checks, does them infrequently, or if residents have no knowledge of the results of compliance checks, how might this affect binge drinking and drinking & driving in your community? Please the rationale for your response.

Consistent enforcement, including compliance checks is crucial to reshaping community norms and changing the cultural attitudes of acceptance regarding underage drinking and DUI related crime. Enforcement of current MIP/DUI laws creates deterrence of risky behaviors – as the perception of risk increases, negative behaviors decrease.

## Alcohol Seller/Server Training

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The selling or serving of alcohol to minors and the continued sales or service of alcohol to someone who is intoxicated can contribute to the misuse of alcohol in your community. Most communities offer free training on a periodic basis to individuals who sell or serve alcohol in a business establishment. The general accessibility of alcohol can be significantly impacted by the practices of alcohol establishments.

### **QUESTION 18 Alcohol Merchant Retail Sales Training**

Discuss the trends shown in Table 2-4. How do the number of RBSS trainings and number of people trained vary over time? Is this trend consistent with the relative growth rate of alcohol licenses and the turnover rate of alcohol servers in your community? Discuss the implications of this trend for binge drinking and drinking and driving in our community

The Sanders Community has a variety of conditions that contribute to youth consumption. With regard to alcohol, there are approximately 100 people for every bar/liquor license holder, making accessibility easy. Likewise, the lack of policy regulating alcohol, i.e., open containers, minimum server age, age of patrons in bars, and controlled access at events that serve alcohol, makes for a scenario where youth are intermixed with adults and alcohol in establishments, on the street and at events - only recently has Montana required that drivers of vehicles not drink alcohol while driving. All of these environmental conditions contribute to a cultural acceptance of alcohol use and more notably youth alcohol use.

The community norm of alcohol involvement in a variety of life activities creates a level of acceptance and comfort by youth regarding alcohol. If, at virtually every social event the adults have a drink, there is “open” access to the bar, students pass on average three bars with signage promoting alcohol on their way to school, 18 year olds can serve alcohol in bars, children 4 years of age are allowed to sit at a bar while their parents have a drink and if; until a few years ago, moms, dads, sisters or brothers could drive down the freeway drinking a beer, it is not difficult to understand that the life of Montana youth is inextricably linked with alcohol. This is certainly the case in the Sanders Community. Alcohol is not just a norm, but also a culture and a way of life. Survey statistics confirm just 25.6% of youth feel their parents would think it was wrong for them to consume alcohol.

This culture of alcohol is undergoing transformation as the community's readiness for change is increasing. This is particularly apparent in the support has received in response to the Social Host Bill. Changing community attitudes have created an entry point where more parents are beginning to understand that it is not acceptable to serve alcohol to other people's children. Although, in the larger community there is still a general denial about the detrimental health effects of alcohol, particularly on youth health, there is more awareness that adults should not provide youth with alcohol. Elevate Coalition in collaboration with the Sanders County DUI Task Force plans to build upon this growing awareness and use the Social Host Initiative momentum to work toward addressing stricter policies for Minor in Possession citations (Elevate Coalition-Drug Free Communities Grant Application)

Much attention has been given to the issue of underage access to alcohol through retail sources and this attention and resulting awareness is leading to a more proactive approach by servers to the issue. The issue of over-service, visible intoxication and binge drinking by adults remains a concern in throughout Sanders County.

Awareness of the issues of UAD, binge drinking and drinking and driving is heightened in Sanders County. Servers talk openly about not wanting to sell to minors and of carding more regularly.

Binge drinking is still an issue across the lifespan. Adults willingly engage the issue of underage drinking and most agree that "something needs to be done", but are less likely to engage discussion about their own use or binge drinking with adults. Over-intoxicated adults are still commonplace in Sanders county drinking establishments. There is more awareness of the danger of drinking and driving and residents across the lifespan speak of increased enforcement presence.

RASS training has built awareness of the law and liabilities associated with selling to minors. Servers across the county are much more likely to card young patrons. Young adults ages 21-27 report being carded consistently in most establishments. But there are a few exceptions. Although they do not intentionally sell to minors, they don't consistently take precautions to prevent the sale of alcohol to minors. There are known establishments that often serve minors especially if the bar is busy. Young people attend the events and are likely to be served if they order a drink. There is a need for increased communication with law enforcement around the timing of these events, and a need for law enforcement officials to conduct walk-throughs during the event. The deterrent effect of LEO presence especially with those under age 21 would greatly reduce the likelihood that a minor would try to order or that a server would sell without question. The importance of RASS training not only to educate, but to empower servers to recognize and refuse service is more important than ever.

**QUESTION 19 Alcohol Merchant Retail Sales Training**

If your community does not hold RBSS trainings, how might this affect binge drinking and drinking and driving in your community?

Merchant Education is held on a quarterly basis in Sanders County.

**Retail Availability Questions**

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**QUESTION 20** Based on information gathered about liquor licenses, alcohol compliance checks, RBSS training and other local data, what are the retail-availability problems that might contribute to binge drinking and drinking and driving and their consequences in your community? Explain the rationale for your response.

RASS training has built awareness of the law and liabilities associated with selling to minors. Servers across the county are much more likely to card young patrons. Young adults ages 21-27 report being carded consistently in most establishments throughout Sanders County - but there are a few exceptions. Although they do not intentionally sell to minors, servers do not always take precautions to prevent the sale of alcohol to minors. There is a need for increased communication with law enforcement around the timing of these events, and a need for law enforcement officials to conduct walk-throughs during the event. The deterrent effect of LEO presence especially with those under age 21 would greatly reduce the likelihood that a minor would try to order or that a server would sell without question.

Since the visible signs of intoxication start subtly, the importance of RASS training not only to educate, but to empower servers to recognize and refuse service is more important than ever.

Retail Availability: Youth describe alcohol as easy or very easy to get and although they rarely try to access alcohol through retail sources such as bars or convenience stores, if they were to try, they would likely succeed.

**MTCCP Workbook – 2009-2010**

In the conclusion of the MTCCP, one area of retail availability has improved greatly. Alcohol outlets are being more careful and have improved on the rates that they sell alcohol to minors. At the present time, based on conversations with law enforcement, community members and bar owners it is the consensus that over service is the leading area of retail availability that contributes to drinking and driving in Sanders County.



**QUESTION 21**

Based on the above considerations, to what degree do you believe retail availability is impacting the binge drinking and drinking and driving and its consequences in your community? Place an "X" on the scale below. Explain the rationale for your response.

Youth describe alcohol as easy or very easy to get and although they rarely try to access alcohol through retail sources such as bars or convenience stores, if they were to try, they would likely succeed. Awareness of the issues of UAD, binge drinking and drinking and driving is heightened in Sanders County. Servers talk openly about not wanting to sell to minors and of carding more regularly. Young adults speak of being carded in places they were never carded before.

Binge drinking is still an issue across the lifespan. Adults willingly engage the issue of underage drinking and most agree that "something needs to be done", but are less likely to engage discussion about their own use or binge drinking with adults. Over-intoxicated adults are still commonplace in Sanders County drinking establishments. There is more awareness of the danger of drinking and driving and residents across the lifespan speak of increased enforcement presence. Establishments are less likely to serve minors, and there is a greater awareness of the liabilities associated over service.

No impact

Major impact

0 1 2 3 4 **5X** 6 7 8 9 10

**CRIMINAL JUSTICE – PART 1**

The next causal area included in your community environmental assessment has to do with the criminal justice system, which includes the court system and all types of law enforcement (City Police, Sheriff or Deputy, Tribal Law Enforcement, Forrest Service, Park Service, University Police, others). This will require 'on-the-ground' data collection on your part.

**Conviction Rates**

To understand how the criminal justice system in your community addresses binge drinking and drinking and driving, you will need to visit the clerk of court for all circuit courts in your community. Each clerk should be able to provide you a listing of the cases filed in 2006 for the alcohol-related crimes listed below. Communities with active DUI Task Forces may also be a source for some of the data.

**QUESTION 22 Conviction Rates**

Based on Table 2-5, discuss the impact the conviction rate may be having on your community.

Per community level research and conversation with local prevention workers – it seems difficult to get a handle on how the criminal justice system and convictions rates are affecting the whole system.

***Per MTCCP Workbook – 2008-2009***

DUI's (driving under the influence) have the highest rate of dismissal - were dismissed, the largest by far of any of the categories reviewed. Although the amounts of dismissals are less than the amount of convictions it aids in the communities perception that DUI's are not a priority to law enforcement. Based on many interviews with law enforcement, all law enforcement officers feel they have a personal charge to remove intoxicated drivers from the streets of the Sanders County communities. The many dismissals is not completely indicative of officer error, but may also be caused by attorneys and judges that find it inconvenient or time consuming to prosecute such offenses.

2009-There is not a specific type of crime that has a conviction or dismissal rate that is noticeably different than others. Sanders County is showing vast improvement in this area! The hope of the Sanders County Alcohol Compliance Team (SACT) is that showing consistent enforcement will aid in detouring drinking and driving and binge drinking. \*It should be noted that the SACT realizes that the number of tickets written by the county and city agencies is under what the real problem is. The reality is that there are many more drivers on the road that are intoxicated but are not ticketed. It has been discussed that public awareness needs to increase in regard to the issue of understanding reasonable suspicion and probable cause. The SACT also noted that each agency saw a reduction in available employees and funding. \* It should also be noted that Thompson Falls cites into their own city court and they were unable to provide a time for the program officer to review citations nor provide them. The County Attorney's office has agreed to assist in the matter. Once the information is obtained it will be included. \*

2009-As in years pervious the conviction rate is a complexity that is just now being "un wrapped". Some areas are still showing improvement in the County but the improvements are not as note able as the need for change. As with many areas of this project the timeline for funding is difficult, with everything that is done and that needs to be done, it is always two steps forward and one step back.

***\*2012 DUI Conviction Rates, Incomplete - Add additional information when collected.***

**QUESTION 23**

Based on Table 2-5, identify any specific type of crime that has a conviction or dismissal rate noticeably different than others. What does this suggest about binge drinking or drinking and driving within your community.

***\*Refer to Q. 23 – MTCCP Narrative - Add additional information when collected.***

**Key Informant Interviews with Law Enforcement**

As part of this environmental assessment you will need to conduct interviews of key law enforcement officers. If your jurisdiction is served by both a police department and a sheriff's department you are encouraged to do an interview with both the Chief of Police and the Sheriff but consider what interviews would be the most appropriate and informative for your community. Other law enforcement to consider includes Tribal Law Enforcement, Highway Patrol, Code Enforcement, Fish and Game or Forrest Service.

#### **QUESTION 24 Key Law Enforcement Interviews**

Based on your interviews with law enforcement officers others on this topic, what efforts are your law enforcement agencies pursuing to address binge drinking and drinking and driving in your community?

Compliance checks have just begun in Sanders County and will be conducted randomly throughout the county on a quarterly basis. Successful businesses will be *recognized* for their part in helping to create a safer/healthier community and businesses failing a compliance check by serving alcohol to minors will be reported by name in the local newspapers.

Saturation and party patrols are currently being conducted during high-risk time periods such as holidays and special events.

*\*Sanders County Sheriff's Department is actively patrolling and enforcing DUI laws.*

#### **QUESTION 25 Key Law Enforcement Interviews**

Based on your interviews with law enforcement officers others on this topic, what efforts are your law enforcement agencies NOT pursuing to address binge drinking and drinking and driving in your community? What appears to be the primary reasons they are not pursuing identified efforts?

Sanders county law enforcement officials are ramping up patrols and actively pursuing UAD/MIP and DUI behaviors throughout the county. Social Host laws have been researched and although we are beginning to see a shift in community norms and the drinking culture in Sanders County, the community is not ready to implement the Social Host law and doing so could quite possibly create strong resistance that would create and undermine recent prevention efforts.

### **Use of Local Ordinances**

#### **QUESTION 26 Use of Local Ordinances**

Based on Table 2-7, discuss the application or enforcement of each ordinance that exists in your community. Is the ordinance applied consistently? Is use of the ordinance visible to the community? Does law enforcement view it as a useful tool in addressing alcohol-related problems?

Law enforcement believes having an open container law in place for each community is extremely important.

Plains, MT – Some Alcohol Restrictions at Community Events are in place ~

Physical Boundaries around beer gardens, however, individuals are not required to stay within the this area and alcohol is allowed throughout the fair grounds.

Mandatory RASST – Effective 2011

#### **QUESTION 27 Use of Local Ordinances**

Are there ordinances which do not exist in your community but which may be especially effective in addressing your binge drinking or drinking and driving in your community? If so, which ones, and why?

LEO speak of administrative policies being good for community events, but they are not enforceable - they can be present and/or deter “behavior”... but if challenged, there really isn’t anything they can do from an enforcement perspective. Based on law enforcement interviews, and community perception surveys, Elevate Youth Coalition and DUI Task Force members understand how important it would be to go for the city level policies - even more so than social host because readiness is so limited - at least another year before it will be possible to have conversations at the community level and develop a plan to move forward. Law enforcement believes having an open container law in place for each community is extremely important.

Likewise, the lack of policy regulating alcohol, i.e., open containers, minimum server age, age of patrons in bars, and controlled access at events that serve alcohol, makes for a scenario where youth are intermixed with adults and alcohol in establishments, on the street and at events - only recently has Montana required that drivers of vehicles not drink alcohol while driving. All of these environmental conditions contribute to a cultural acceptance of alcohol use and more notably youth alcohol use.

#### **Other Local Data: Criminal Justice**

Feel free to consider other local data that will help you better understand how and to what extent criminal justice issues in your community may contribute to binge drinking and its consequences in your community. For example, you may have information on a local DUI Taskforce that exists and its activity level. You may be able to assess information from your local drug courts. If you have other local data, describe the results here.

#### **Criminal Justice Questions**

##### **QUESTION 28**

Based on information gathered from alcohol conviction rates, use of local ordinances, key law enforcement interviews and other local data, how might the local criminal justice system be

contributing to binge drinking and its consequences in your community? Provide the rationale for your response.

LEO speak of administrative policies being good for community events, but they are not enforceable - they can be present and/or deter "behavior"... but if challenged, there really isn't anything they can do from an enforcement perspective. Based on law enforcement interviews, and community perception surveys, Elevate Youth Coalition and DUI Task Force members understand how important it would be to go for the city level policies - even more so than social host because readiness is so limited - at least another year before it will be possible to have conversations at the community level and develop a plan to move forward. Law enforcement believes having an open container law in place for each community is extremely important. Likewise, the lack of policy regulating alcohol, i.e., open containers, minimum server age, age of patrons in bars, and controlled access at events that serve alcohol, makes for a scenario where youth are intermixed with adults and alcohol in establishments, on the street and at events - only recently has Montana required that drivers of vehicles not drink alcohol while driving. All of these environmental conditions contribute to a cultural acceptance of alcohol use and more notably youth alcohol use.

#### **QUESTION 29**

Based on the considerations in Question 21, to what degree do you believe the concerns around criminal justice are contributing to binge drinking and its consequences in your community? Place an "X" on the scale below. Provide the rationale for your response.

\*2012 DUI Conviction Rates, Incomplete - Add additional information when collected.

Per community level research and conversation with local prevention workers – it's difficult to get a handle on how the criminal justice system and convictions rates are affecting the whole system.

\*Recent controversial statement made by the District Court Judge regarding the 24/7 Program being unconstitutional, sends a strong message to our communities that feeds in to a community culture/attitude that already views substance abuse as "no big deal" in our county.

#### ***Per MTCCP Workbook – 2008-2009***

DUI's (driving under the influence) have the highest rate of dismissal, 12 were dismissed, the largest by far of any of the categories reviewed, although the amounts of dismissals are less than the amount of convictions it aids in the communities perception that DUI's are not a priority to law enforcement. Based on many conversations with law enforcement, every officer interviewed felt that they had a personal charge to remove intoxicated drivers from the streets of our community. The many dismissals is not completely indicative of officer error but may also be caused by attorneys and judges that find it inconvenient or time consuming to prosecute such offenses. Community members are able to make poor choices without the fear of a strong conviction, just an inconvenience. Law enforcement is working with limited knowledge,

resources, and staffing on an issue that citizens are concerned about, but don't understand. In the end law enforcement is criticized for lack of effort and over zealousness, there is quite a bit of finger pointing.

2009-As in years previous the conviction rate is a complexity that is just now being "unwrapped". Some areas are still showing improvement in the County but the improvements are not as note able as the need for change. As with many areas of this project the timeline for funding is difficult, with everything that is done and that needs to be done, it is always two steps forward and one step back.

No impactMajor impact

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 **7X** 8 9 10

### **SOCIAL AVAILABILITY – PART 3**

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Social availability includes the obtaining of alcohol from friends, associates and family members, but it also refers to the availability of alcohol at gatherings such as parties and other social events where the alcohol is provided as part of the event.

#### **Environmental Assessment Data**

At this point in time, limited data is available to support a thorough environmental community assessment of Social Availability as a causal factor. More data will be available in 2008 from a state-wide survey of public perceptions and opinions related to alcohol-related issues, including social availability of alcohol within your community. In addition, a survey of youth attending the Minor in Possession (MIP) Program will begin soon with data available by mid-2008. Survey topics include where/how they obtained alcohol.

In the interim, several alternative sources of data are available to review and discuss as a basis for determining the relative importance of Social Availability to binge drinking and drinking and driving in your community. Suggested alternative data sources include:

- The perceptions of law enforcement representatives from the Key Law Enforcement Interviews (in the Criminal Justice section) related to MIP's and sources of alcohol for underage youth.
- Have several individuals contributing to this assessment complete the Preliminary Public Opinion Survey for Social Availability of Alcohol (provided in Appendix D) and then discuss the responses.

**QUESTION 30 Prevention Needs Assessment**

Based on Tables 35 and 36, how does student perception of being caught for drinking in your community compare to the perception across the state? Is your problem bigger, smaller or about the same? Discuss the differences.

***\*Add comparison rates***

Decreased perception of risk and harm and little communication with the adults young people say matter the most in their decisions regarding substance use are contributing to a marked increase in 30 day use by 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students. When we talk about our hopes for our community and for our youth, we do not mention risky sex, unplanned pregnancy, accidental drowning, crashes or death. Topics such as depression, decreased athletic and academic performance never enter the conversation. But as long as our young people choose to drink early, often and in high quantities - they will continue to suffer the consequences of risky behaviors associated with underage drinking, and until our community is willing to engage the difficult questions around cultural norms and the root causes of the problems we face – we will continue to clean up the physical and emotional mess left behind as a result. Maintaining current prevention efforts is important as is broadening the scope to the larger community with a focus on the youth/parent connection. Each sector of the community (educators, youth serving organizations, volunteer groups, prevention specialists, enforcement agencies, the faith community...) can all come alongside youth and families and offer prevention efforts from their own perspectives.

**Social Availability Questions****QUESTION 31**

Based on information gathered from law enforcement interviews, public opinion surveys, the Prevention Needs Assessment, and other local data what are the concerns around social availability that might contribute to binge drinking, drinking and driving, and respective consequences in your community? Provide the rationale for your response.

Social Availability: The lack of policy regulating alcohol, i.e., open containers, minimum server age, age of patrons in bars, and controlled access at events that serve alcohol, makes for a scenario where youth are intermixed with adults and alcohol in establishments, on the street and at events - only recently has Montana required that drivers of vehicles not drink alcohol while driving. All of these environmental conditions contribute to a cultural acceptance of alcohol use and more notably youth alcohol use. Parents are named in public opinion surveys as allowing or providing alcohol to youth and PNA data confirms public opinion. 30.5 percent of youth grades 8-12 report getting alcohol from a relative or from home with parent permission. Less than one half of youth grades 8-12 believe they will be caught by a parent if drinking alcohol without permission. 38.5 percent of Sanders county youth report their primary source of alcohol is someone they know over the age of 21. Young adults frequently socialize with junior high and

high school students. Young adults and law enforcement officials alike report witnessing parties where the age range is “14 to 40”.

This culture of alcohol is undergoing transformation as the community’s readiness for change is increasing. There is a growing awareness that the choices we make as adults and the environment we create for our youth affects a developing child’s attitudes and decisions toward substance use. Although we are far from being the safe and healthy community we are striving to become – deeply rooted cultural norms change slowly - there is more awareness that ultimately, adults are the lifelines for youth access to alcohol and prescription drugs.

### QUESTION 32

Based on these considerations, to what degree do you believe social availability is impacting binge drinking and drinking and driving and its consequences in your community? Place an “X” on the scale below. Provide the rationale for your response.

No impact Major impact  
0      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      **8X**      9      10

Social availability remains our biggest obstacle, but because of increased law enforcement presence and action, simple policies and increased conversation around expectations of safety at community events and a steady stream of media articles, guest columns, radio interviews and PSAs, it is easier for those who feel UAD and DUI are unacceptable to speak up and be heard.

Parents are named in public opinion surveys as allowing or providing alcohol to youth and PNA data confirms public opinion.. Less than one half of youth grades 8-12 believe they will be caught by a parent if drinking alcohol without permission.

This culture of alcohol is undergoing transformation as the community’s readiness for change is increasing. Changing community attitudes have created an entry point where more community members, elected officials and community leaders are beginning to understand the significance of social availability. They are more aware than ever that the choices we make as adults and the environment we create for our youth affects a developing child’s attitudes and decisions toward substance use.

Although we are far from being the safe and healthy community we are striving to become – deeply rooted cultural norms change slowly - there is more awareness that ultimately, adults are the lifelines for youth access to alcohol and prescription drugs. Community prevention workers plan to build upon this growing awareness and use the lessons learned in creating the Community Events Ordinance to work toward addressing stricter policies for Social Host/Unruly Gathering citations.

The impact of social attitudes remains high, but attitudes are beginning to shift. Social availability is still high, but the desire by many to address the issue and change the culture over time is increasing. This is evidenced by the numbers of people will to speak to the issue of increased enforcement of current laws. Additionally, there is an increasing awareness and belief that law enforcement officials are working together and are addressing both UAD and DUI and



Rx Drug Abuse. There has been a consistent effort amongst law enforcement in the past 18 months to “do things differently”.

## **PROMOTION – PART 3**

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Promotion refers to attempts by alcohol retailers and the alcohol industry to increase demand through the marketing of their products. Once again, this will require some original data collection to acquire a sense of the depth and potential impact of various marketing tactics surrounding alcohol in your community.

### **Advertising**

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#### **QUESTION 33 Advertising**

Based on the data you collected regarding the level of advertising in local print media within your community, advertising via signage on buildings within your community and advertising via sponsorship of local events, is the overall level of alcohol advertising in your community excessive? Provide the rationale for your response.

*\*Advertising is not a problem in Sanders County*

#### **QUESTION 34 Advertising**

Based on the data collected regarding the level of advertising in local print media within your community, advertising via signage on buildings within your community and advertising via sponsorship of local events, how might the magnitude of alcohol advertising in your community be impacting binge drinking and drinking and driving and its consequences?

*\*Advertising is not a problem in Sanders County*

#### **QUESTION 35 Alcohol-Related News Articles**

Based on the data collected regarding the number of news articles in contrast to the amount of advertising in local print media within your community, how do you think alcohol use is being portrayed? How do you think this is impacting binge drinking and drinking and driving in your community?

*\*Need additional information*

## Promotion Questions

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### QUESTION 36

Based on information gathered from sponsorships, advertising and other local data, what are the concerns around promotion that might contribute to binge drinking and drinking and driving and the associated consequences in your community? Explain the rationale for your response.

*\*Need additional information – Advertising does not appear to be a problem in Sanders County*

### QUESTION 37

Based on these considerations, to what degree do you believe promotion is impacting binge drinking and its consequences in your community? Place an “X” on the scale below. Explain the rationale for your response.

No impact  
0      1      **2X**      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10  
Major impact

*\*Need additional information – Advertising does not appear to be a problem in Sanders County*

## SCHOOL POLICIES – PART 3

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### QUESTION 38

Based on information gathered from your school districts, what are the concerns around how those policies contribute to either the underage substance use or reduce underage substance abuse and the associated consequences in your community? Explain the rationale for your response.

*\*Information requested regarding Sanders County School Policies – Elevate Youth Coalition*

### QUESTION 39

Based on these considerations, to what degree do you believe your school district’s policies and programs in your community are impacting binge drinking and its consequences in your community? Place an “X” on the scale below. Explain the rationale for your response.

No impact  
0      1      2      3      **4X**      5      6      7      8      9      10  
Major impact

Elevate Youth Coalition and FVCDC understand the value of using a multi-faceted approach and involving all community sectors when implementing environmental strategies aimed at reducing youth substance abuse throughout our county and in our community in efforts to create a systemic, sustainable change. Elevate Youth follows the DFC/SPF-SIG model focused on community collaboration efforts. Schools are actively involved in the Elevate Youth Coalition and are very supportive of prevention efforts throughout the county and play a vital role in the coalition's work.

## **MEDICAL FIELD INFORMATION – PART 3**

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### **QUESTION 40**

Based on information gathered from local hospitals, pharmacies, and prescribers, what are the concerns around prescription drug abuse in your area? Explain the rationale for your response.

Nationwide, 1 in 5 teens have abused prescription drugs, and next to marijuana, Rx medications are the most commonly abused substances. Every day, almost 2,500 teens abuse an Rx medication for the first time.

Prescription drug abuse has its own set of obstacles and Elevate Youth has identified ease of access to prescription drugs as a major condition contributing to youth abuse of these drugs. In the Sanders county Community, the high rates of disability (nearly 20% of the population), creates an easy access point for youth to obtain potent prescription drugs. With many adults relying on prescription medications to ease their suffering, youth not only see adults consuming prescription drugs on a consistent basis, but also know where the drugs are stored and if/how they would get caught if they were to steal/use them, creating ease of access and an acceptance of use among the youth culture.

Prescription drugs can create a lucrative business. In a community where approximately 20 percent of the population lives below the poverty line, many youth have found this as a way to make quick cash. Unfortunately, they do not realize that the addiction threshold/trigger level in the young developing brain is much lower than that of alcohol use and are therefore, potentially providing their buyers with much more than a good buzz.

In the Sanders County Community, awareness of the scope and magnitude of prescription drug abuse in general and youth access in particular is lacking. Most individuals have grown up with the notion that prescription drugs are meant to help, and the thought that one could be addicted to these medications is a relatively new concept. As a result, readiness for change is low.

Another environmental condition of the Sanders Community leading to increased youth access to prescription drugs is Interstate 90 (I-90). The Interstate is the only west to east thoroughfare in Montana. The Interstate travels the length of Mineral County and branches off into Montana State Highway 135 towards Sanders County. Highway 135 is the only road east from the Idaho border, accessing all towns in Sanders County. The Montana Highway Patrol undertakes numerous interdictions along the I-90 corridor and has confiscated hundreds of thousands of tons of illegal drugs, including one arrest that resulted in the confiscation of over 10,000 hydrocodone tablets. Over the past 2 years there have also been 15 to 20 undercover operations in Mineral

County alone involving the sale and transfer of prescription medications illegally (Mineral County Attorney, 2010). Sanders County reports a similar situation.

In a State where the conversation about the need for accountability or tracking the dispensing of prescription drugs is just beginning, ignorance of the possible dangers translates to risky levels of use for youth and adults. Paired with low levels of awareness, the lack of legal boundaries surrounding prescription drug use has been identified by Elevate Coalition as the major contributing environmental factor to youth abuse of prescription drugs.

Elevate Youth and the Sanders County DUI Task Force has been successful in coordinating with community leaders and organizations around the issue of alcohol abuse prevention and is seeking to build the same cooperation and involvement in response to the Community's growing prescription drug abuse problem.

The Sanders County Community must rely on the involvement of community leaders and organizations such as the Sanders County Detectives/Drug Force that currently support the coalition and encourage others to do the same. Due to our relative isolation in Northwest Montana, Elevate Youth and the SC DUI TF must play a vital role in intentionally organizing the community around the efficient and strategic use of limited resources.

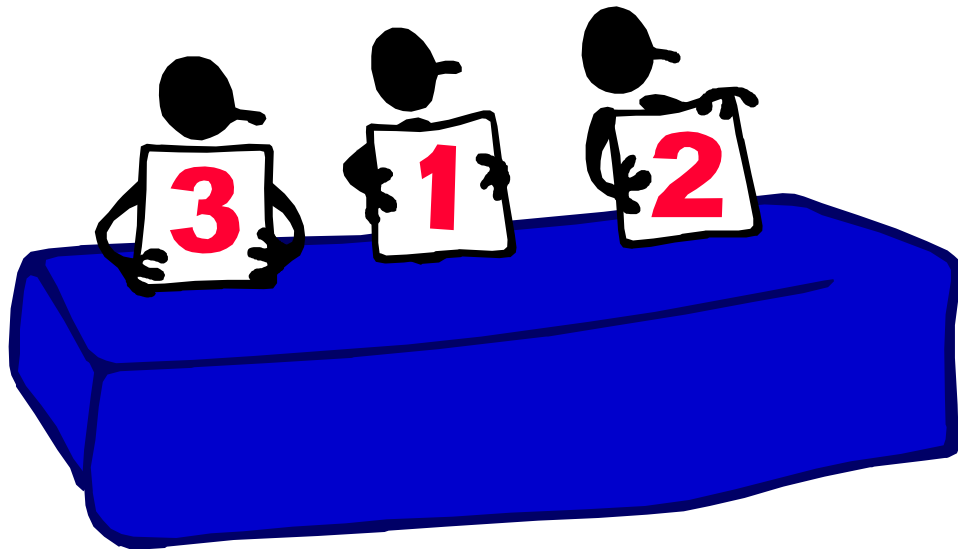
#### QUESTION 41

Based on these considerations, to what degree do you believe the medical field data you collect is impacting prescription drug abuse and its consequences in your community? Place an "X" on the scale below. Explain the rationale for your response.

*\*Please refer to question 39 for narrative*

No impact											Major impact
0	1	2	3	4	5	6X	7	8	9	10	

# Prioritization



**Task Three:**  
**Rank the Four Causal Areas from the Greatest Contributor to Your  
Community's Problems to the Smallest Contribution**

## Prioritizing

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The next stage involves prioritizing the causal areas. The first step is achieved by placing the appropriate scores from Questions 14, 22, 25, and 29 next to its related causal area. Based on the scores, rank each causal area with 1 being the highest priority and 4 the lowest. In the case of a tie, decide which area is of higher priority for your community in relation to binge drinking, drinking and driving, and motor vehicle crashes. After having completed the ranking, explain the rationale for your rankings on the next page.

The prioritization will be the basis of for determining which combination of environmental prevention policies, practices and programs are strategically best for your community.

Score	Rank	Causal Area
5	4	Retail Availability
7	2	Criminal Justice
8	1	Social Availability
2	6	Promotion
4	5	School Policy

6

3

## Medical Field Info

## QUESTION 42

Provide the rationale for your rankings of the causal factors.

1.) **Social Availability** - remains the #1 issue in Sanders county. There is an underlying attitude of acceptance across the community that alcohol is not only present, but also a welcome member of the Sanders County community. Long- standing traditions and attitudes that continue to prevail in the adult community are passed down to the current generation of would be consumers of alcohol. Students often cite “there’s nothing to do” and adults in the community often echo the sentiment. School, law, ministerial and community leaders speak of the need for change, but often feel defeated by the size of the task and often feel alone in the battle.

2.) **Criminal Justice:** Law enforcement, attorneys and judges are on board in Sanders County and continue to build trusting relationships with each other and Elevate Youth and the SC DUI Task Force. Training is ongoing and professional dialogue and regular communication is evident at all levels – as is affirmation for jobs well done. There is a need for community support of increased enforcement efforts and the Elevate Coalition is committed to working with LEO and media to portray the efforts from a community health and safety, pro-social viewpoint.

3.) **Medical Field Information:** There is a general misconception that because Rx drugs are prescribed by doctors there is no potential for misuse or abuse. Prescription drugs are easily accessed in Sanders County through both medical providers and on the street illegally.

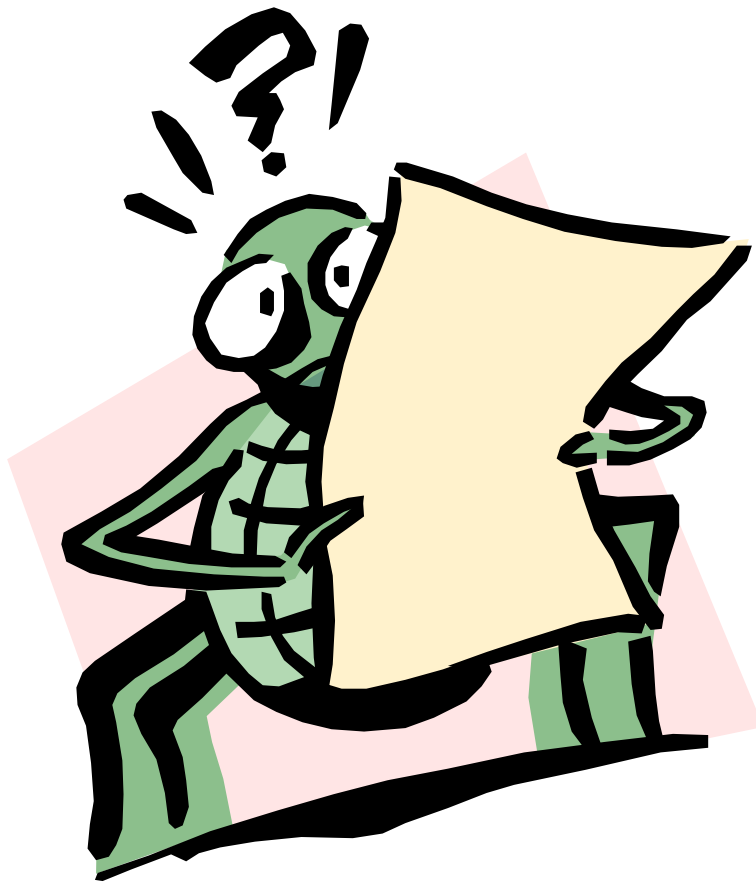
4.) **Retail:** Increasing awareness about youth access to alcohol through retail outlets has led to RASS training and compliance checks. Pass rates are increasing and agreement that youth need not be served in bars or sold to in stores is evident. Increasing awareness about adult over-consumption and its social implications as well as the dangers of DUI is needed. In addition to decreasing consequences associated with DUI and overconsumption, this will help in creating new cultural norms for behavior.

5.) **School Policy:** Schools in Sanders County continue to grapple with the idea of training rules/codes of conduct and their application in extra-curricular activities. Coaches, administrators and parents alike understand the risk involved when they set up the rules and expect kids to follow them while at the same time experience the reality of underage drinking in Sanders County and come face to face – year after year with the decision to consistently enforce them. Educators and parents alike know that it is tempting to turn the other way, pretend they don’t hear the conversation in the hallway or on the phone, or just deny that there could be a problem in the first place. They don’t want to believe that the “good kids” that choose to participate in athletics would risk everything for the chance to party. But they do, and the community is left again to wrestle with the reality that underage drinking isn’t about “good” or “bad” – it just is. So now what?

6.) **Promotion:** remains insignificant as compared with other issues in Sanders County. Promotion of the “right” message will increase significantly over the next year.



# Final Question



**Task Five:**  
**Determine What Combination of Causal Areas**  
**Your Community should Target**

## Your Final Conclusions

Now that you have considered the data surrounding your community's alcohol problems, as well as each causal area for these problems, you need to decide what to do. This decision will ultimately be part of your community's SPF SIG Strategic Plan and lead to very specific environmental evidence-based strategies for you to implement. For now, think about your data and especially your final rankings on page 66 as well as your resource assessment on page 69. Also, mull over the possible connections among the four causal areas. Would it be possible to target social availability without also targeting criminal justice/law enforcement? Will changes in retail availability necessarily require changes in the enforcement of policy? Now answer the following question.

### Final Needs Assessment Question

#### QUESTION 43

It is very unlikely that your community can or needs to address every causal area to impact existing binge drinking and drinking and driving problems. What combination of causal areas is most likely to produce changes in the environment. Which currently exists within your community? Which specific causal factors will you target and why?

Focus will continue to address the Criminal Justice System and Social Availability of alcohol by continuing to build trusting relationships within the current law enforcement system. We will work to increase awareness of the scope and magnitude of the problem and build support within the community for addressing the issue with research-based strategies including increased enforcement.

We will facilitate activities that foster trusting relationships between key community leaders from a variety of sectors of the community and law enforcement personnel to demonstrate support for each other and willingness to advance the goals of the DFC Grant, DOT grant funds will enable high visibility compliance checks to be routine throughout Sanders County.

Local prevention workers will continue to offer RASS training to all servers in Sanders County. Elevate Youth will continue to build support for advancing the goal of alcohol restrictions at community events by encouraging City Councils to implement city level ordinances and community groups to voluntarily implement best practices into the alcohol sales and service component of their event.

Local media including newspapers and radio will continue to be a vital component in building awareness, support facilitating change.

